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Cambodia

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SIHANOUK ON VIET CONG CAMP REPORT

FOR YOUR INFORMATION D

PHNOM PENH DOMESTIC SERVICE IN CAMBODIAN AT 1340 GMT 24 NOVEMBER 1967 CARRIES AN 80-MINUTE RECORDED SPEECH BY PRINCE NORODOM SIHANOUK DELIVERED 24 NOVEMBER 1967 AT CONSTRUCTION PROJECT INAUGURATION CEREMONIES IN THE CITY OF KIRIROM.

AMONG OTHER TOPICS COVERED BY PRINCE SIHANOUK IN THE SPEECH ARE HIS FIRST MONITORED REMARKS ON THE REPORTED DISCOVERY BY AP CORRESPONDENTS GEORGE MCARTHUR AND HORST FAAS OF A VIET CONG CAMP IN CAMBODIAN TERRITORY.

AFTER READING A LENGTHY CABLE FROM CAMBODIAN UN REPRESENTATIVE HUOT SAMBATH CITING U.S. PRESS REPORTS OF AND REACTION TO THE AP PREPORT, PRINCE SIHANOUK SAYS:

"AND NOW HERE ARE MY COMMENTS. YOU SEE, THEY HAVE WRITTEN THAT THE DISCOVERY OF THE CAMP IN QUESTION NOW RAISES DOUBTS ABOUT THE ORIGINAL DENIAL BY PRINCE SIHANOUK OF THE THEORY THAT VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST FORCES HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED TO TAKE REKUGE IN HIS COUNTRY. IF WE WERE REALLY THE ACCOMPLICES OF THE VIET MINH AND THE VIET CONG, NOTHING WOULD HAVE INDUCED US TO AUTHORIZE THESE AMERICANS TO GO AND INVESTIGATE WHEREVER THEY WANTED. NOW WASHINGTON SAYD: 'LOOK, NOW PROOF HAS BEEN DISCOVERED OF THE FACT THAT THERE IS A VIET CONG AND VIET MINH CAMP IN CAMBODIA; THIS PROVES THAT SIHANOUK LIED, SIHANOUK CONCEALED THE TRUTH FROM US.' BUT IF I WERE LYING, I WOULD NATURALLY CONTINUE TO CONCEAL THE TRUTH; I WOULD CONTINUE TO KEEP MY DOOR, THE DOOR OF CAMBODIA, VLOSED TO THE AMERICAN PRESS. BUT I OPENED IT, AND I LET THE AMERICAN PRESS HAVE ABSOLUTE LIBERTY TO GO WHEREVER THEY WANTED. THEY WERE ABLE TO GO WHEREVER THEY WANTED AND COULD REPORT WHATEVER THEY WANTED TO WASHINGTON. AND SO NOW THEY ASSERT THAT I LIED.

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"BUT NOW I AM GOING TO READ TO YOU ANOTHER CABLE, FROM OUR AMBASSADOR IN PARIS, SON VOEUNSAI, WHO CABLED US THE FOLLOWING: 'THE FRENCH PRESS HAS REPORTED THE DISCOVERY OF A VIET CONG CAMP BY THE AMERICAN NEWSMEN, BUT MR. (?BERTIL GALAND), A SWISS REPORTER, WAS ALSO IN THESE BORBER AREAS WIH THE AMERICANS--MR. (BERTIL GLAND) OF PARIS--AND HE AFFIRMS THAT HE WAS WITH THESE NEWSMEN IN THE REGION OF MIMOT AND WAS REVOLTED BY THE GROSS CALUMNY OX THE AMERICANS.

"YOU SEE! A SWISS JOURNALIST WAS REVOLTED BY THE LYING ACCUSATIONS OF THE AMERICAN PRESS. WELL, IT IS SAID ALSO THAT THE AMERICAN JOURNALISTS HAD EVERY EVIDENCE TO ESTABLISH THE FACT THAT CAMBODIA WAS SERVING AS A CAMP GROUND FOR THE VIET CONG AND THE NORTH VIETNAMESE FORCES; HOWEVER, THESE AMERICAN NEWSMEN SAID--WROTE--ALSO THAT THE VIET CONG AND THE VIETMINH TROOPS WERE CAMPING WHERE THERE WERE NOO CAMBODIAN SOLDIERS, UND WHERE THERE WERE NO CAMBODIAN POSTS--MOT EVEN A SINGLE INHABITANT. SO THEY CHOOSE THOSE AREAS WHERE THERE ARE NO CAMBODIAN SOLDIERS, PARTICULARLY THE UNINHABITED NORTHEAST REGION. BUT YOU KNOW; WHEN THE AMERICANS COME TO BOMB CAMBODIA, WHICH THEY HAVE DONE REPEATEDLY, BO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY HAVE DROPPED THEIR BOMBS? NOT ON THE UNINHABITED AREAS! THEY DROP THEIR BOMBS AND STRAGE EXACTLY THOSE AREAS WHERE THERE ARE CAMBODIAN POSTS, OR WHERE THERE IS A CAMBODIAN FLAG FLYING, OR HERE AND THERE WHERE THERE ARE SETTLEMENTS. AND SO YOU CAN SEE RIGHT AWAY THAT THEY ARE CONTRADICTING THEMSELVES: THEY SAY THAT THE VIET CONG AND THE VIET MINH CAMP WHERE THERE ARE NO CAMBODIAN POSTS, WHERE THERE ARE NO CAMBODIAN HABITATIONS, BUT WHEN THEY BOMB US ON THE PRETEXT OF BOMBING AND STRAFING THE VIET CONG AND THE VIET MINH, THEY ALWAYS DO IT ON OUR POSTS, OR WHERE THERE IS EVIDENCE OF A CAMBODIAN FLAG, AND THEY ALWAYS DO IT ON OUR VILLAGES.

"SEE! THAT IS ALREADY ENOUGH TO TELL YOU THAT THE AMERICANS ONLY WANT A SIMPLE PRETEXT TO TERROGIZE THE CAMBODIANS AND FORCE THEM TO ALIGN THEMSELVES WITH THEM, TO BEND THEIR KNEES TO THEM, AND TO FORCE THEM TO ABANDON THE POLICY WE HAVE ALWAYS FOLLOWED--THAT OF INDEPENDENCE AND NEUTRALITY."

(EDITOR'S NOTE: THE FOREGOING IS TEXT OF SIHANOUK'S REMARKS ON THE VIET CONG CAMP REPORT.)

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